SHRI KAMAL NATH : Madam, I have already laid it on the Table of the Lok Sabha. I think most of the facts are known to the Members. So, may I have the permission of the House to lay it on the Table of the House ?

DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN : Madam, we have to seek clarifications.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You will seek the clarification after I have finished the other business.

DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN : He cannot get away like this.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : I lay the statement on the Table.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now we go to the statement of the State Minister in the Ministry of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

(श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह) : कापी कहां है

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I think you can continue. Everybody has got a copy.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Introduction of New Satellite-based TV Channel in India

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO) : Madam, as the Hon'ble Members are aware, Television in India started in 1959 on an experimental manner. During the last 34 years, we have established 546 television transmitters all over the country. These transmitters are capable of giving TV programmes within a fixed geographical area. Initially, these transmitters could not be inter-connected into a national network. With the launching of communication satellite, it was possible to transmit a common programme from one production centre and network the programme throughout the country. At present, two Indian communication satellites, INSAT-1D and INSAT-2A are in operation and are being used for the purpose of television in India. A number of transponders on these two satellites are being used for regional programmes in the States of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat, Assam and West Bengal. Such regional programmes are produced in the State capital studios and are carried by all the transmitters within the respective States from 5.00 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. At other times of the day, the programmes originate in Delhi and are transmitted and networked throughout the country. Government has considered the need for utilising the spare time available in these transponders and introduce a variety of television services to cater to the diverse interests and needs of the country.

The Hon'ble Members are aware that several foreign satellite TV channels have started beaming their signals to this country and we are facing what is described by many as cultural invasion. In order to give a befitting response to this challenge, Government proposes to start a few more channels using the spare time on these transponders. These TV signals, uplinked through the transponders on Indian satellites, can be received through appropriate TV receiving equipment, commonly known as dish antenna and can be further distributed by the cable operators. A large number of cable operators today have installed equipment to receive signals from Asiasat (STAR, BBC & ZEE TV). The reception from the Indian satellite system can be received by the same dish antenna by changing its direction. Individuals can also have their own dish antenna. One of the attractions for such cable operators to reorient the dish antenna to the INSAT system will be that Doordarshan would also be capable of offering a multi-channel option to its viewers comparable to any such service available in India. It is proposed to start these channels in a phased manner beginning from 1st April, 1993 and increase both the number of the channels and their duration as and when software and hardware facilities are available.

It is proposed to devote these channels to the following :—

(i) Primary Channel—the present format of Doordarshan.

(ii) Metro Channel.

(iii) Entertainment and Cultural Channel.

(iv) Sports Channel.

(v) News, Current Affairs and Business News.

I am reiterating for the information of the Hon'ble Members that while there will be no change in the present method of reception for the primary channel of Doordarshan, the Metro Channel, when uplinked through the satellite, can be received by TV viewers only if they are connected to the appropriate dish antenna excepting in the cities of Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta where it will be received in the normal manner as at present. The other three channels can be recieved by the TV viewers if they are connected to the appropriate dish antenna, anywhere in India.

Government has already announced a scheme of allotment of time slots to private production houses and private producers on the metro channel of Doordarshan. A similar scheme can be adopted for the three new channels proposed to be established now.

Today the transponders used for the existing national channel and metro channel and the proposed three channels are working on two different satellites, i.e. INSAT-1D and INSAT-2A. It is expected that with the launching of INSAT-2B, it would be possible to re-arrange the transponders on a single satellite so that five channels can be obtained on a single dish antenna.

It may also be of interest and happiness to the Hon'ble Members that the advertisers who are advertising on foreign satellite channels after paying foreign exchange would now be able to show their products on the proposed five channels. I am sure that those who saw the unfriendly propaganda on the foreign satellite channels would not like the advertisers to go there.

May I here take the opportunity to appeal Indian advertisers to rise above commercial considerations by advertising in the Indian medium so that they are not supportive of any anti-India propaganda.

I hope the Hon'ble Members would appreciate the steps now being taken by us to optimally utilise the capability of our Indian satellite designed and put in orbit by our dedicated band of scientists. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Before I call the Members to ask for clarifications, I only want to ask whether this new link-up with the satellite is going to be on the same frequency on which the other programmes are coming, or it will be on a different frequency.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : No, Madam, It will be the same frequency. Only the four metro channels will be uplinked.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : No. I mean whether it will be on the same frequency on which whatever programmes are coming from foreign Televisions, the Star TV, the Zee TV, the BBC TV, all those TVs. Will you interrupt them ?

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : On our own frequency.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : A different frequency ?

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : No. On our own frequency. Whatever we are doing will not be on the frequency of the Star TV. They will have to change the dish antenna to get our programme.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I see the direction will have to be changed.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : It will have to be moved a little.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Shri Jagdish Prasad Mathur. Not present. Mr. Fernandes.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa) : I congratulate the hon. Minister for upgrading the Doordarshan to hi-tech. The hon. Minister has rightly said that we wanted to compete with the Star TV beaming signals through a satellite which has invaded our skies.

These programme of the Star TV and the CNN are 24-hour programmes. The hon. Minister has not made clear whether these five channels will have 24-hour programmes or they will be only for a certain period of time as we have the national hook-up now.

The Minister has also mentioned some States. They have studios in the State capitals. Madam, I think, this is a previlege enjoyed only by a few States. So, I want to request the hon. Minister to see that there is a studio in every State capital. The small States like Goa are now being made satellite States of the bigger States. This is not fair, and politically it is not wise, because there is a lot of agitation especially when there is discrepancy in the languages. We have an agitation in Goa at the moment because we have the local transmission from Bombay. Basically the programme is in Marathi, and that creates a lot of tension and pressure. So, I would like to request the hon. Minister to see that a studio is installed in every States capital throughout the country.

Again, the Minister has mentioned at page-3 that the people in the metropolitan cities of Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta need not have dish antennas for this programme. I think they are going to beam very powerful signals to these cities. I think, it will not be fair for the rural area. We have to educate the rural masses in the villages. Will he, in due course of time, provide this facility to the rural area also because the poor people will not be able to afford a dish antenna and to get cable TV connections ? So, I would like the hon. Minister to respond to this. How long will he take to give this facility to villagers in the rural area of our country ?

Madam, the last aspect I would like to know from the hon. Minister is this. Broadcasting is a Central subject, but there are some State Government which on the pretext of controlling the foreign invasion, are collecting some revenue. They have passed their State laws. They are not controlling it at all. They are only making revenue out of them. Will the State Governments be directed not to interfere in the domain of the Centre because I still consider information and broadcasting is a Central subject and the State Government should not interfere in it.

I hope the hon. Minister will respond to my queries.

Thank you, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Thank you.

Before I ask Shankar Dayal Singhji to take the Chair, as tomorrow is a holiday, I wish all of you a happy *Eid.*

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : The same to you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Thank you very much.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Ugadi also.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN . Today is Gudi Padava and new year—the Kannada New Year, the Maharashtra New Year and the Telugu New Year. So, we wish everybody a very very happy new year.

SHRI IQBAL SINGH (Punjab) : The same to you, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Thank you, thank you very much.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH) In the Chair]

DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN (Madhya Pradesh) : I expected this from the dynamic Minister. I know my friend Mr. K. P. Singh Deo, is new to the Ministry, though he is an old hand. I must congratulate him for this. His predecessors were just making committees after committees. I have been keenly watching the functioning of this Ministry for the last several years. There was a Malik Committee, there was a Damodaran Committee, there was a Vardhan Committee. So many committees were formed and reports prepared, but nothing was done about them. Mr. K.P. Singh Deo, the hon. Minister, certainly deserves

congratulations and compliments for having shown dynamism in coming out with this Statement. But I see some very serious follies in this. I would like to place those Points for his consideration so that things could still be corrected. In its very preamble the functioning of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is to inform, enertain and educate. When I see his plan and see the channels that he has listed, I see no element of education at all. He is only talking of information and entertainment. Now, who will do the education part ? In a country like India, mass media should have this primary task towards education. I request him to consider having a developmental channel, which will give developmental news, developmental information and developmental education to the Indian masses. The Government has its limitations in bringing about development in this country, but if once the people can be informed and educated how they themselves can improve their quality of life, a tremendous acceleration can take place in the national development. Here comes the role of the mass media. This is the duty of the Doordarshan. (Time bell) Kindly allow me some more time. There are only a few Members to speak.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH) : I will allow you only three to four minutes.

DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN : Thank you very much.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH) : You have got only one minute more.

Three minutes you have already taken.

DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN : Oh ! My God. Be kind, Sir.

Sir, once you have multiple transponders to have channels, which can provide entertainment, education and information, there is also a scope to have a medical channel on them. In many countries today doctors, nurses, para-medicos are having their education and training through a medical channel. There is nothing like 'children's channel' so far in this country. Children are a very important segment of our population. In the scheme of things that the Minister has presented through this, I think this is an omission. So, while he has made five points, I wish that he extends the points in his list. I believe this list is only an indicative list and not an exhaustive list in the scheme of things. So, in that things like 'children's channel' or 'the developmental channel' or 'the medical health channel' will be included. How can I forget things like family planning, things like environmental education, which are so important for the sustenance of this nation ? Time and again this House has held debates where it has been explained that India will not be sustainable in the next 30 years or so, if we cannot curb our population explosion. This cannot be achieved by making statements or passing laws. We need to bring about a behavioural change amongst our citizens. Now, for bringing about a behavioural change, we need to inform them and keep informing them, so that their attitudes change. And with the repeated changes in the attitudes, their practice will change. So, to be able to bring about a behavioural change in matters of fertility regulation or sex behaviour, we need to have a very powerful information effort. That is totally missing in the scheme that the hon. Minister has presented before this House.

Only one more point I want to make. The Minister says this time will be allotted on these transponders on the same lines as he has set on Metro Channels.

8.00 P. M.

Why does he take a model which has already failed ? We know that Doordarshan also has a model. They were taking programmes after the Committee approved them. We have seen in the last few years, there were several litigations pending in various courts. All this process of getting private programmes is repeatedly getting bogged down because of the intervention of the court. In a democratic country like ours, people have a right to go to the court. This method of centralising all the powers and deciding what people would like to see should not be left to the bureaucrats and to some of the Committees of the Government. So, Doordarshan model has failed. But the Minister says that this metro channel can be extended to these transponders. The whole country

knows that nobody is coming forward to by time-slots on this metro channel even after reducing the prices from Rs. 84,000 to Rs. 54,000. So pricing was not the issue. Methodology was the issue. The Government is not geared to get into serious business like having programmes.

Earlier when we were dealing with only one channel, we could not cope up with the work, with the business. Now we are talking of having five transponders which will have so much of work. He will not be able to do it. Then, why doesn't he sell time-slots ? Why doesn't he sell transponders ? All the people who are having satellites in the world, like America, like Russia, like Hong Kong, a tiny place, they are selling their transponders. They give their transponders on lease for two years, three years and five years and make a good money. They don't bother whether the channel will succeed or not. Since the Government of India has taken a revolutionary decision by making these transponders available through INSAT-1D and INSAT-2A for this communication network, it should come to the most practical, most scientific, most viable, workable strategy of leasing out transponders to the trusted houses. Have your money for a limited period and then the responsibility will be theirs. Sir, why I am saying this is because development of a channel and loyalty of the viewers of a programme is a very serious business. It takes time. It requires a lot of investment. There should be continuity and people should know that they have to see this channel as India is now getting into this channel race. But the whole concept, whole business, whole strategy of communication is well identified. We have successful models in the world. We have bogus models in the world. We have failure models in the world. I would request the hon. Minister to adopt the successful models and not the bogus models. Let not some kind of an outdated ideology prevail upon the dynamic decisions and efficient functioning of his Ministry.

I will be grateful if the Minister responds to some of my suggestions. The Minister may clarify his mind, whether what he has said is the last word or he will take into account the suggestions which came from Members of Parliament and from professionals in this field. Thank you.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry) : Mr. Vice Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. I thank the hon. Minister for coming with a statement on the introduction of a new satellite based TV channel in India which has received wide appreciation from the people of this country.

Sir, the viewership of television in India is being dominated by Asiasat (STAR, BBC and ZEE TV) and CNN. The programmes shown by Doordarshan are being disliked by the people because they are not according to the specifications and standards prescribed. Therefore, the new system which the hon. Minister is introducing through these transponders is a welcome measure. When a threat is being posed by foreign organisations in beaming their programmes, Doordarshan is also taking up this challenge now. It is a revolutionary step for which I congratulate the hon. Minister. Sir, while congratulating him, I have to submit that the quality of the programmes which are being beamed over the television has to be improved. Three days back, I put a question to the hon. Minister. I asked him whether, when the Metro Channel was introduced, to receive response from the people, any survey been conducted by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry. The reply from the hon. Minister was 'no'. My humble submission is that when you introduce a new system in the television, the response of the lakhs of viewers who are seeing the programmes is very much required. You have to update your programmes according to the wishes of the people. That is very important. Now, you are following the Open Sky Policy allowing all the multinationals and foreign TV companies to come here and beam programmes. That being the case, you will have to improve the quality of Doordarshan programmes. I am not saying this from my point of view alone. When I talk to various cross-sections of people, they tell me that except the news programme, all the programmes of Doordahshan are not worth seeing. This is a fact of life which the hon. Mini-

ster has to understand by bringing these three channels, they have to improve the quality of the programmes that are being beamed.

Another important aspect is that there is a lot of corruption going on in the Information and Broadcasting Ministry in selecting programmes. It was published in the Press also. When so many people go there for getting their programmes sponsored, with script and other things, only selected people are being considered. This is a complaint made from various quarters. We are also receiving several complaints from various people who are prepared to submit various programmes to Doordarshan. The hon. Minister, young and dynamic Minister, has to take care of this. I am saying this in the interest of the department and I want the Minister to consider it.

I would also like to know from the hon. Minister what time they are going to allot initially from the 1st April, for beaming programmes in the three channels. Has wide publicity been given to the viewers either through the television or over the AIR about these programmes ? What action are you going to take in this regard ? The dish antenna is kept static at a high place to receive the programmes from the other channels like the STAR TV and BBC. For the viewers to change the direction of the antenna for receiving these new channels is very difficult. Therefore, a technology may be evolved and given to the people so that the antenna can receive both these transponders and other telecasts from the same direction. This will help the viewers. I am saying this in the interest of the viewers.

There is another thing I would like to submit to the hon. Minister. He need not have the fear that our traders, industrialists, are going to foreign authorities for the purpose of commercial exploitation. For beaming their programmes for commercial news, for advertisements, most of the people are not going. That is the impression which is in the mind of the hon. Minister. When I go through the statement, I find it. It has to be removed. People are prepared to cooperate with you, your department. They are prepared for commercial exploitation, they are prepared to help you, provided you improve the quality of the programmes which the viewers have to see. Therefore, as far as the advertisement part of it is concerned, you can rest assured that the business community and the industrialists will co-operate with you.

With these words, I congratulate the hon. Minister on having taken a revolutionary step and helping the viewers of this country by bring these three channels as early as possible after assuming charge as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. Thank you.

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL (Bihar) : Sir, I rise to respond to the statement made by my hon. friend whom I respect a great deal and whose dynamism I am very much impressed. I am happy that he has tried to take up a new challenge and tried to deal with it in a different way. The difficulty of Indian TV has always been that we have always expanded hardwarewise. We are second to none so far as hardwares are concerned. If you kindly pursue the statement in detail, it is a list of hardware expansion. The tragedy of Indian television has always been that we have given very little attention to software and have made very little investment in software. The net result is that we have not been able to create the type of impact that a software software would. Hardware expansion by itself is not much of a doing. I am reminded of a story and if you permit me, Sir, I will relate the same. When I was looking after this Ministry, once a small State in the Gulf got hold of a new television system. The King was very impressed and he gave a contract to the German firm who overnight installed the television system and they wanted to inaugurate it on the King's birthday. Two days before the King's birthday, our Ambassador telephoned me. He said, "It is a very strange situation that they are in, that the television system is ready but they don't know what to show." And therefore, he approached us to send him Indian films. That is exactly in a different fashion what happens here when my hon. friend talks in terms of giving an entertainment channel, which means more Indian films, which basically is the spelling out of the fact

that we are unable to invest in software, create our own software. Software is basically a manifestation of Indian culture and unless we are able to correlate them, unless we are able to create a new type of culture which is very popular, we will not be successful. The Indian cinema culture has its many pluses but many minuses also. Therefore, if a transponder is available for inculcation of that glitter, glare and glamour to the Indian villages, I do not know what the cultural impact is going to be. Why is the BBC succeeding ? Why is the CNN succeeding ? It is basically because they are giving news every hour. People see them more for news. Why do they see them in news? It is primarily because of credibility. Our problem all the time has been of credibility. Indian radio or Indian television, unfortunately, lacks credibility. It lacks credibility because Government after Government promises but does not liberate the media and since it does not liberate the media, the credibility cannot be built. It got to that ridiculous extent that on the day when Mrs. Indira Gandhi was assassinated, even Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had to switch on the BBC to verify what the correct news was. What happened after the Bombay riots ? We learnt first from the BBC and the CNN what was happening in Bombay and then from All India Radio and Doordarshan. Today itself, a newspaper in America has published a story that India and Pakistan were going to war in 1990. In this one day alone the Voice of America, the BBC, the CNN, everyone has interviewed me on the television but not All India Radio, not Doordarshan. They are indifferent to these stories and they will come to it when the story becomes very different and the image gets very much distorted and then they will organise discussion, invite you and pay Rs. 750 without result and without impact. Therefore, mere expansion of hardware, without trying to build credibility, will not solve the problem. And credibility cannot be built as long as the governmental control continues. I have been for many years Minister in charge of this portfolio. I am also one of the sinneres in that and all my efforts failed to liberate the media. Again, every Opposition party has come into power and every Opposition party can be blamed for this, they did not liberate the media. You go on building transponder after transponder. They will have no impact and India will not be a gainer till you liberate the media and also invest something. Recently you have seen the impact that even the staff of TV had gone on strike. What were they asking for ? Liberate them. Professionalism cannot prosper only in an independent atmosphere. Professionalism cannot prosper otherwise. Therefore, unless the Government of India changes the policy radically, this will be a waste of effort. People will see the films on your transponder but they will go to the BBC for news and they will always go to the CNN for news and as long as that continues, the problem will always be there. Also, there is not only the credibility but also the immediacy. How quickly do we react to a situation ? If something happens within one hour, is your media able to respond or not ? Immediacy is the first compulsion and desirable factor for any electronic media ? What is the difference between print media and electronic media? Newspapers give you news 25 hours late, the television and radio must give you immediately. And if they don't and outsiders do, then obviously its image suffers.

One point that, I think, we must also keep in mind is this. When India entered the T.V. Satellite era, we had taken it on one year's loan from America and we did it primarily for family planning and for education and the results were extremely good. Also at the same time we decided...(*interruption*)... Kindly give me a minute more. We decided some years back that we would have serials on family planning; that is how the Soap Opera was introduced. I was instrumental in getting an agreement signed with the Mexico T.V. and quite a few interchanges took place. Secretaries and others went there and came back and we signed an agreement because Mexican Television had achieved good results through family planning serials. We did a strange thing. We picked up the Soap Opera but forgot the family planning ! So now you have the Soap Opera minus any purpose and, therefore, you get the worse of both.

One thing more and I will finish. And that is, that the Star T.V. and B.B.C. and the C.N.N. are the arms of their own countries. They are not addressing the British, they are addressing the wide world. And you are building, Sir, your

own transponders to address only your own people ! Don't you want to tell others what you are thinking, what India is ? And, therefore, your Satellite will not be able to address those people. The advertisers also are looking for much wider scope of things than we are expecting. At the same time you must keep in mind that the fact that propaganda—you call it the alien propaganda, I am not very much worried about it—can be neutralised only by our credibility; propaganda can never be cancelled by a counter-propaganda. Therefore, whether some propaganda comes to you or not, our people are strong enough, they don't believe in an outsider's propaganda. But our people are very vulnerable when it is couched in a language which comes from those channels which are credible. And, therefore, credibility is more important than anything else. I hope my hon. friend will also look at the fact that he is talking in terms of Cable T.V. well, at the moment we have the obsolete law where Cable T.V. is not permissible. Cables cannot cross the roads. Please modify those laws also, make some rules about how cable systems can function, who can, what will be the fees and unless you are able to do that, again it will be one Ministry asking the other to break another Ministry's law. Communications Ministry bans Cable T.V. and I don't know how you will marry the two. Thank you very much. (ends)

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM (Andhra Pradesh) : Thank you, Sir. This is a very exhaustive statement and it revealed many issues but I feel that equally it has also concealed many issues. For example, Mr. Gujral has already pointed out the deficiency in software and my friend, Mr. Narayanasamy has gone into the rampant corruption in the Doordarshan Departments in allocating time, in selecting serials, in sponsoring programmes and all that. There is rampant corruption. Sometimes it is sickening. Therefore, the Minister has to address himself to these major problems first.

And another thing we have been promising is that this T.V., the entire broadcasting system, will be made autonomous. A Bill was also passed here in this Parliament. I don't know what happened to that Bill. During the National Front Government the Prasar Bharati Bill was passed. After this Government came into power, this Bill had been put in cold storage.

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL : Buried.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Buried. And I don't know what the thinking of this Government is and I think—I don't want to use any word—they want to "Tewari" the news or "Tewari-ing" everything that has been appearing on the T.V. and that is the reason why it has lost its credibility. Sir, one or two issues I would like to raise apart from those issues which were raised by our friends. This is with regard to regional programmes. There are regional programmes now. The time allotted to regional programmes is only three hours or three hours and thirty minutes or four hours. They are going to introduce some more channels in the future because of the spare time available in the transponders, viz., Primary channel, Metro Channel, Entertainment and Cultural Channel, Sports Channel, News, Current Affairs and Business news. But there has been a demand from various States for an autonomous channel for the State purposes. Will the Government consider this demand? Our country has different languages and different ethnic groups and each State is as big as any of the developed western countries; for example, Andhra Pradesh's population is 6 crores, Uttar Pradesh's population is about 12 crores and Tamil Nadu's population is 5.5 crores, with rich and varied cultural heritage. Will a centralised TV system from Delhi really cater to the needs of those cultural groups, ethnic groups, language groups ? What is wrong in giving an autonomous channel to these various States when they demand an autonomous channel ? Will you please think over this ? At the time of the Constituent Assembly discussions also this issue was raised and it was debated whether information and broadcasting would be made a State subject or a Central subject or a concurrent subject. There was a lot of discussion and some people actually argued that information and broadcasting should be made a State subject. But ultimately the Constituent Assembly had deci-

ded that it should be included in the Central list. Simply because it is in the Central list the Central Government should not try to have total control over information and broadcasting, over the electronic media. They should believe the States. Unless they take up decentralisation of organisations, decentralisation of the entire system, some of the ills in the management of the electronic media which we are dissussing now will not be tackled. It is not possible to remove these ills. So, this has to be decentralised. States and other agencies should also be given some say in the allotment of time, choosing the programmes and all that. This may also kindly be looked into.

There is one more point. This is with regard to advertisements. Here the Minister appealed to the advertisers to use the Indian TV. There is no need to beg any advertiser. They are all businessmen. They want some quality. If you improve the quality of the transmission, if you improve the quality of the programmes, if you improve the managerial efficiency, naturally the advertisers will come and Doordarshan will get the required revenue. There is absolutely no difficulty about it. There are certain deficiencies in the present structure in respect of allotment of time, arrangement of programmes, etc. I will not be happy if more time is given, if more channels are opened without their being used properly. Are they being used properly ?

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL : Sir, I think a wrong impression is bring sold as if the entire TV has to depend upon the advertisement. I think even the developed countries have come to a stage where at least one public channel is without any advertisement. Therefore, if you want to educate the people, you please have a channel without advertisement. Now you want to sell everything to the advertisers. You are creating consumerism in India. It is totally anti-social.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : That is exactly what I wanted to tell the Minister. Too much hankering for advertisement for revenue is not good. There are other areas which you have to bear in mind. The most important point is decentralising the entire system. If any State comes forward with the demand that they would like to have an autonomous channel for itself, the Government of India can concede that demand. There is absolutely nothing wrong in it. Kindly think over these things. Thank you Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH) : Mr. Minister,— you are the most fortunate man because only four persons have sought clarifications.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, I am extremely grateful to the hon. Members who have given some very useful suggestions. They have also suggested where we should put more emphasis and where we should improve. With your permission I would like to respond to each and every point. Sir, Mr. John F. Fernandes has mentioned about a studio in Goa. Sir, studio is not a part of this statement. But I will bear it in mind and at a later stage I will inform him. He also wanted to know what we are doing for the rural poor. He also wanted to know about the Metro Channel and its duration. Sir, my statement is very clear. We have the Primary Channel apart from the Metro Channel, which caters to the rural areas. We shall increase the hours of programme for rural areas. He wanted to know whether it will be for 24 hours. Sir, it would not be for 24 hours. To begin with, we will start a three-hour service which will be increased gradually. Sir, the three-hour service will start from the 1st of April. Sir, he also asked about the revenue collected by the States which was not controlled. Sir, it is a State subject and the Centre cannot intervene or control the revenue collected by the States. There is no step, at the moment, to interfere with the States collecting revenue out of cable.

Dr. Jain is a very experienced person. I am very grateful for the very kind words he has spoken about the Ministry. I would only like to state here that I am grateful to my distinguished predecessor. Due to his efforts we are today in a happy position to announce these schemes which we have announced today. It is as a result of the Mahalik Committee and the Vardhan Committee which went into the entire aspect.

commercial aspect as well as the programme aspect. As I had already stated in the House, the Mahalik Committee was set up because the budgetary support of the Government came down from 80% to 20% and persistent demands by hon. Members in both the Houses that Doordarshan must pull up its socks to meet the challenges of time. The Vardhan Committee also looked into the personnel aspect. It was an inter-Ministry group to see how to improve the overall structure. Therefore, I am grateful to these Committees which have given some valuable input and feedback which needs constant review, evaluation and improvement. This is a continuous process. I would like to assure the House that it is foremost in our mind to improve the organisation, both the personnel as well as the material management of Doordarshan. Dr. Jain also referred to the preamble and also gave us the ethos, that is, to inform, educate and entertain. He wanted developmental news, element of education, medical channel and childrens' channel. These are very, very important, especially family planning, environment, population and educating the viewers. He also said, "I hope this list was only illustrative and not exhaustive." I agree with him. It is not exhaustive and I don't want to make it bulky and take the time of the House. We have programmes in the primary channel on all these subjects. We have taken note of his suggestions. He had made the same suggestions in the earlier meeting also and I think him for his constructive suggestions. In the five channels which we are planning and which will be coming in phases, we shall definitely keep these programmes in mind because I also feel that they are very, very important for the country, especially to inform, to educate and entertain. Entertainment is part of our charter of duties. Entertainment we shall have to. But dissemination of information, giving information and educating the viewers will also have top most priority. Our effort is also to meet the challenge from foreign satellite networks who have been increasingly focussing their attention on the rural viewers through cable operators. Therefore, to compensate the main channel of Doordarshan for this cross-section of viewers we shall try to see that the dish antennas are priced low so that they are more accessible to people. We should also be using our Doordarshan to inform the viewing public what they should do as we have done in the case of Bhubaneswar where we were not getting the desired effect because the antennas were still turned to Cuttack although the production was from Bhubaneswar. After that things have improved. We have been getting feedback. It is not that we are not getting feed-back. I would also like to inform Dr. Jain that we intend to use Doordarshan capability for in-house training for our own personnel because we do not have many training institutions or adequate training institutions so as to bring in the question of professionalism in every sphere of our personnel and manpower. We intend to use optimally whatever capabilities exist with us. Dr. Jain mentioned about women and children. This is coming on the primary channel. But we will see to it and ensure that these programmes will be shown on other channels too. Then Dr. Jain enquired about the time allotment. The House is aware that there was a committee for time allotment known as 'Time Committee'. It has also been debated in this House and the other House. They have given a document. Government has studied it. Wherever, we have had grey areas, we have resolved it and very soon that scheme will be available for the metro channel which is expected to be implemented from 15th of August. About leasing of channel which he has mentioned it is not under consideration at present. But this is certainly a suggestion which we shall definitely examine from the point of its various ramifications. He also wanted us to look at his successful model. We have an open mind and we definitely would like to be benefited by the views of the hon. Members here some of whom are very experienced. I have great respect for my distinguished friend, Mr. Inder Kumar Gujral. When I first came to Parliament, he was looking after Communications and Parliamentary Affairs and when I had made my maiden speech here I remember how responsive he had been. He had been extremely kind and I do appreciate his wide experience of this Ministry. He knows the pitfalls and he also knows why it has not been possible to unshackle the bureaucratic or Governmental con-

trol. But we do have an open mind on this and his suggestions will be given the highest regard. We are going to discuss this in the near future first with the Parliamentarians, then with the political parties, then with the trade unions and its associations, which I have already assured like my distinguished predecessor had assured this House and the other House. And in the next deliberation of the Consultative Committee also, we are going to deliberate about the Prasar Bharati Bill. Many Members have asked about this. We have an open mind. It has not gone into cold storage and it will not go into those two years...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Two years are over.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : I know that two years are over. It was introduced in 1990 at a different time and there have been three Governments during those two years...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : I am talking about your Government.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : We are taking it up in the next meeting which is going to be held very shortly and that is one of the subjects of discussion. And Dr. Jain knows, he attends our meetings. He is very much aware that the next topic is the Prasar Bharati Bill and the media policy. I quite agree that our quality has improved. We are ready to take on any challenge. In every sphere, it has become very competitive and I quite agree that our hardware section is second to none in the world but in the software, we have to have constant improvement and compete with others. And we have to develop our own computers and professionals. That is the exercise in which we are engaged at the moment. I can assure you that no stone will be left unturned to improve the quality and the professionals skill of our people as well as their betterment. Mr. Narayanasamy asked whether advance publicity to the scheme has been given. I thought, in deference to Parliament, Parliament being in Session, I would have the privilege of first taking into confidence both the hon. Houses about such a momentous decision and we shall be giving publicity thereafter. Sufficient publicity will be given to this scheme. And regarding the other satellite channels also, as has been suggested by Mr. Narayanasamy, adequate advance publicity will be given before the programmes are sought. Regarding the quality of programmes also about which Mr. Narayanasamy had mentioned, it is with this view, that is to provide multiplicity of choice to the viewers, that this scheme has been introduced. Now, Sir, what is the success or failure of a system? In the case of Doordarshan, the success or quality rating depends on the viewers. And the Air Time Committee which have given its document lays great stress on quality because success depends on quality and professionalism. And in these time slots, anyone who sponsors the programmee or advertises it has to ensure quality because the producer will be losing a lot of his inputs and will not be successful if he does not maintain quality and compete with other quality programmes. And this is exactly what we urge to ensure. Dr. Jain wanted to know about the proposed channels for educational programmes. As I have already mentioned, in the normal channel which we have and the three other channels which we expect would function from 5th May, 1993, the frequency of the educational and other developmental programmes would be increased. And from August, 1993, we expect that all the five channels will become operational and educational coverages will be increased. Regarding Metro Channel which was said to be a failure the Rs. 80,000/- a slot scheme was an hurriedly anounced scheme. It did not get the response. In fact, it got the response but the software was not available. But this time we have taken care to give adequate time-lag and we will reduce it to Rs. 54,000/- as our response after recalculation to make it more competitive and we hope to receive a very good response. If you want, I will let you know about all these programmes. I think it is a copious list which I can give. There are a large number of people who have already responded. The short time-lag has also been overcome and since the Metro Channel was on an experimental basis there were likely to be some mistakes and we were trying to come to grips with the problems. We expect that from 15th August, 1993 when the Air

time. Committee starts functioning, we should not have any setbacks.

Regarding software, I am extremely grateful to hon. Shri Gujral. We have been trying to invest in software the Indian culture, values and ethos and as I said earlier, his advice has been well taken and our effort will be to intensify this and we would like to improve our software as was advised by Shri Gujral How much hardware we have is immaterial; it is software which will be important.

Regarding credibility, I agree with him and he, having been my very, very distinguished predecessor in this Ministry, knows the importance of credibility and there is a constant effort to improve credibility, as I cited, immediately. In the particular instance which he said of Bombay, in fact, we were only a few seconds behind the BBC. I wish to say that Doordarshan does not have the same facility as the All India Radio (Akashvani) which has on hourly bulletin. But if you would care to check up from Bombey, you would find that this time, the Doordarshan of Bombay had responded very well, in fact magnificently. Every one hour, we were giving a bulletin and small captions for people not to panic, not to listen to rumours and I may again say that we were only a few seconds behind the BBC in Bombay. I am sorry we could not keep up that time, we were only a few seconds behind the BBC but we are trying to see how we can overcome that and to show more immediate response than we have been doing hitherto.

Mr. Gujral has also wanted to know as to how we are hoping to achieve the same reach as of the STAR TV. Sir, at the moment, we are using the infrastructure available with our own Indian satellites and transponders. It covers our own area which is quite limited We would definitely like to reach our Indian citizens living outside our borders and we are negotiating for more powerful transponders with larger footprints. I am told that INSAT-2B will be able to provide that. As I mentioned, we will be utilising INSAT-2B which has much larger footprints than what we are having right now. And, in that case, some of the points mentioned by Mr. Gujral will also be taken care of and I believe it is going to be commissioned sometime next year.

Mr. Gujral has also made a very pertinent point, and that is regarding the Cable TV and the multiplicity of Ministries which are involved in this. We are trying to rationalise it.

Mr. Mentay Padmanabham also raised the question of deficiencies in software, corruption in Doordarshan and Mr. Narayanasamy also mentioned about corruption. We would like to have more transparency in our dealings. Already, as the Members are aware, the CBI had looked into some of the serials and they have cleared some of them, a majority of them, from the corruption angle. Today's papers also carry the news that we have computerised everything and, in the presence of 200 people, it is done and we would like to make it as transparent as possible. But delays and other ...es of red-tapism which lead to corruption, we would like to minimise as far as possible and it is not proper for me to give a firm commitment on that. But it is a constant endeavour. This much I would like to assure the House that we ...ld like to make it as much transparency in our dealings, that is, in the Doordarshan and within the Ministry, as possible so that there is no cause for any fingers being pointed at us, because we

would like to tackle corruption from the preventive side, from the deterrent side and from the punitive side.

Shri Mentay Padmanabham has mentioned about the Prasar Bharati, autonomy, regional programmes, etc. Regarding regional programmes, opportunities will be given and we would like to develop the regional programmes. As you have very rightly said, various cultures and languages are there and it is equally important for the regional cultural programmes to be improved and it is also one of our endeavours. Regarding an autonomous channel,....

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : A separate channel for the States.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : On that we have an open mind and when we discuss the Prasar Bharati and the media policy, I am sure we will be discussing this also and then we will be in a better position to have an exchange of ideas with the political parties, with associations and other eminent people in the media and then I will be able to come to this House and explain. It will not be proper for me to react immediately to this.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : You inform the State Governments and that is my request.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : Definitely.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : You elicit the views of the States. That is more important.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : It has also been said that too much hankering after revenue is not good. I agree that it should not be crass commercialisation or too much hankering after revenue. But the fact is that the budgetary support has been withdrawn from Doordarshan. The Doordarshan has to manage with 20 per cent Government support and 80 per cent revenue it has to generate like the Railways or some other public utility services. It is advertisements and the commercial things from which it is getting it. We cannot be unmindful of that fact while being mindful of the cultural aspect, the developmental aspect or the educational aspect which the honourable Members have said. Along with it, we have to generate our own revenue. Otherwise I will not be able to manage.

I think I have answered all the points raised by the honourable Members. I thank them for their indulgence. Thank you, Sir.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह) : मगर एक बात बताईए कि पहली अप्रैल का ही दिन शुरुआत के लिए क्यों चुना आपने ? पहली अप्रैल से क्या कुछ ज्यादा ही संबन्ध है आपका ?

श्री के० पी० सिंह देव : जी हां, जरूर है । मेरा स्टेट भी पहली अप्रैल को बना था सन् 1936 में ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह): लेकिन पहली अप्रैल का और भी कोई महत्व है ?

श्री के० पी० सिंह देव : फाइनेंसियल इयर भी पहली अप्रैल से होता है । प्रोजेक्ट टाइगर भी आपने पहली अप्रैल से किया था और दूसरी बात, मैं कहूंगा नहीं ।